

# Test Your Home For Radon. Your Family Will Breathe A Lot Easier.

With every breath, your family could be exposing themselves to a radioactive gas called Radon. It's impossible to see, smell or taste. And it could be accumulating to unsafe levels in your home right now.

Radon is found at high levels in every state in America. It seeps into your home from the surrounding soil, and sometimes contaminates well water. It's the second leading cause of lung cancer in the U.S. – only cigarette smoking causes more lung cancer deaths. In fact, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Surgeon General have strongly recommended that all residences (except those above the second floor in multi-level buildings) be tested for Radon.

Your family's risk of developing lung cancer from Radon depends on the average annual level of Radon in your home and the amount of time you spend there. The longer your exposure to Radon, the greater the risk. And the risk is much greater for smokers.



Luckily, Radon is easy and inexpensive to detect. And homes with high levels **can** be fixed. But it's up to you to find out whether Radon is a problem in your home. Millions of people have tested their homes already.

## Testing Is Easy And Inexpensive.

Because Radon is completely invisible to sight, smell or taste, special detection kits are necessary to find a potential problem.

Radon detection kits are inexpensive and easy to use. You can purchase a kit from your local health department, or from some hardware stores or other retail outlets.

If you're not sure how to contact your local health department, call the Michigan Indoor Radon Program at 1-800-RADON GAS (1-800-723-6642) for assistance.

After you've completed testing your home, you simply mail the entire kit to the manufacturer for analysis (analysis is often included in the price of the kit). You can choose either a short-term or a long-term testing kit.

## Short-Term Testing Is The Quickest Way To Determine If A Potential Radon Problem Exists.

Short-term testing takes anywhere from a few days to several months to complete. The most common testing devices on the market right now are charcoal canisters, electret ion detectors and alpha track detectors. Short-term testing should be conducted in the lowest living area of your home, with the doors and windows shut, during the cooler months of the year.

## Long-Term Testing Is The Most Accurate Way To Test For Radon.

Long-term testing can take up to a full year. Alpha track detectors and electret ion detectors are the most common long-term testing devices.

When you buy your kit, be sure to look for a test kit that says it's EPA-approved or NEHA-

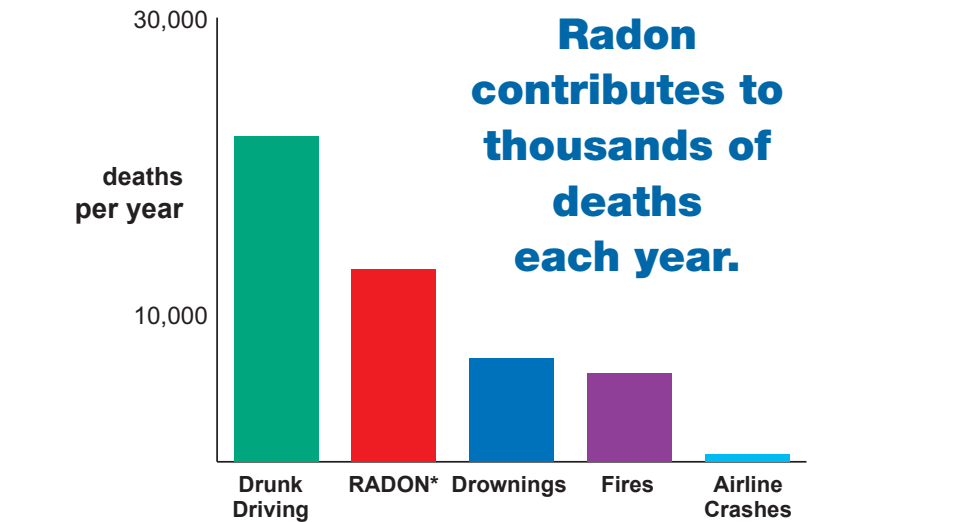
or NRSB-certified. DEQ and local health department offices also have lists of NEHA- or NRSB-certified Radon measurement companies, or you can visit the NEHA website at [www.radongas.org](http://www.radongas.org) or the NRSB website at [www.nrsb.org](http://www.nrsb.org).

## For More Information...

Most test kits contain further information about testing. If your house does need to be fixed, you'll get additional information along with your test results.

If you'd like more information about Radon and a variety of related subjects right now, just contact your local health department, or call the DEQ Indoor Radon Program at 1-800-RADON GAS (1-800-723-6642). And when you have tested, pass this brochure on to your neighbor.

But please be sure to test for Radon as soon as you can. And you'll all breathe a lot easier.



\*Radon is estimated to cause between 7,000 and 30,000 deaths per year.

## Some Common Myths About Radon

**Myth:** Scientists aren't sure Radon really is a problem.

**Fact:** Although some scientists dispute the precise number of Radon deaths, virtually all scientists and major health authorities (like the Centers for Disease Control and the American Lung Association) agree with estimates that Radon causes thousands of preventable lung cancer deaths every year.

**Myth:** Radon testing is difficult, time-consuming and expensive.

**Fact:** Radon testing is inexpensive and easy – it should only take a little of your time.

**Myth:** Homes with Radon problems can't be fixed.

**Fact:** There are simple solutions to Radon problems in homes. Thousands of homeowners have already fixed Radon problems in their homes. Radon levels can be readily lowered for about \$500 to \$2,000. Call your local health department or the DEQ Indoor Radon Program (1-800-RADON GAS) for a list of nationally-certified contractors, or visit [www.radongas.org](http://www.radongas.org) or [www.nrsb.org](http://www.nrsb.org) to view the lists online.

**Myth:** Radon only affects certain kinds of homes.

**Fact:** House construction can affect Radon levels. However, Radon can be a problem in old homes, new homes, drafty homes, insulated homes, homes without basements—homes of all types.

**Myth:** Radon is only a problem in certain parts of the country.

**Fact:** High Radon levels have been found in every state. Radon problems do vary from area to area, but the only way to know your Radon level is to test.

**Myth:** A neighbor's test result is a good indication of whether your home has a problem.

**Fact:** It's not. Radon levels vary from home to home. The only way to know if your home has a Radon problem is to test.

**Myth:** Everyone should test their water for Radon.

**Fact:** While Radon gets into *some* homes through the water, you should test the air in your home for Radon first. If you find high levels but a contractor is unable to fix the problem, then consider testing the water.

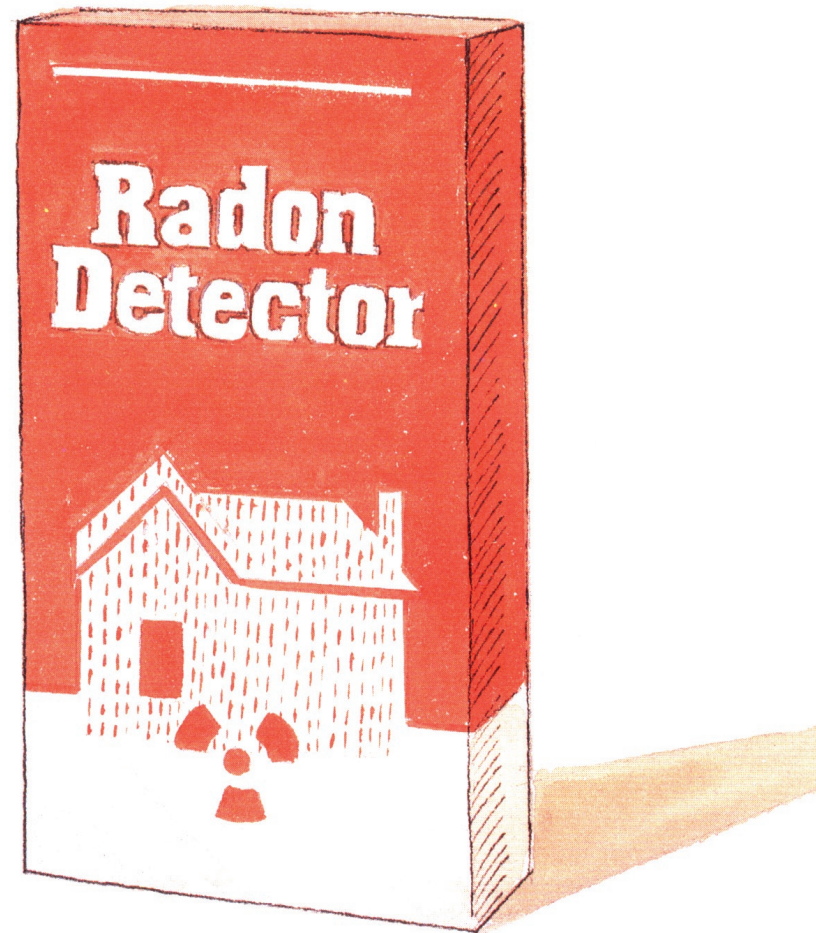
**Myth:** It's difficult to sell homes where Radon problems have been discovered.

**Fact:** Where Radon problems have been fixed, home sales have not been blocked or frustrated. The added protection is sometimes a good selling point.

**Myth:** I've lived in my home for so long, it doesn't make sense to take action now.

**Fact:** You can reduce your risk of lung cancer when you reduce Radon levels, even if you've lived with a Radon problem for a long time.

**Now the  
easy way.**



**Use one of these.**

Contact the  
Michigan Department of Environmental Quality  
Indoor Radon Program  
at **1-800-RADON GAS (1-800-723-6642)**  
for more information about radon.

Printed by authority of Part 135 of 1978 PA 368  
Total Number of Copies: 50,000 Total Cost: \$3,027.55 Cost Per Copy: \$0.0606

**DEQ** Michigan Department of Environmental Quality

The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) will not discriminate against any individual or group on the basis of race, sex, religion, age, national origin, color, marital status, disability or political beliefs. Questions or concerns should be directed to the MDEQ Office of Personnel Services, P.O. Box 30473, Lansing, MI 48909.

John Engler, Governor

[www.michigan.gov/deq](http://www.michigan.gov/deq)

Russell J. Harding, Director



Michigan  
Department of  
Environmental Quality

Indoor Radon Program

EQC 1640 (9/2002)

## **Reducing Radon Risks**

**There are two ways to protect  
your family from Radon.  
First, the hard way.**



**Holding your breath.**